

Summary of meeting at Dorking Halls 3.04.2019.

1. Purpose of the meeting

To explain how the 5% increase in Police Precept in Council Tax will be spent to benefit us- the Council Tax payers.

2. Arranged by Surrey Police as part of “Community Engagement” throughout Surrey

3. Lead Speaker- David Munro, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey.

4. Attendees Mainly local Residents Associations and Councillors

5. LRA attendees –Chair Caroline Brown, Ray Brown, Tony Russell

Mr Munro is responsible for setting the police budget for Surrey

Last year’s precept increase was 2%, this year 2018/2019 it is 5.3%

Mr Munro stated “This amount is needed to both maintain the existing force and provide 75 new jobs, which will be front line officers and PCSO’s, not back room support staff. However I still have to find 5.3m in savings in 2018/2019- due to austerity cuts”

6. Questions to Mr Munro by LRA

Question 1. Will the extra 75 staff be “walking the beat”?

Answer-Not necessarily, as various surveys have indicated that although the public may feel re-assured by this it does not deter crime i.e. not an effective use of police resources. But if a serious crime occurs (e.g. knife or drug related incident) the police will respond very quickly and also stay around for several days afterwards. Mr Munro quoted the Capel newsagent burglary where the owner was threatened with a knife. The police remained in the Capel area for 3 days afterwards – gathering evidence and re-assuring local residents.

Question 2. Do the police have the power to “stop and search” without getting Central Govt approval?

Answer- Yes

Question 3. Are the police training more officers, including PCSO’s, in the use of tasers?

Tony Russell quoted the knife related incident in Leatherhead in January 2017 when a taser officer was called, for back up, by the local PCSO, and just happened to be nearby on that occasion (but factually on that day there were only two taser trained officers on duty available for the whole of Surrey.)

Answer-Yes, but only when they volunteer to be trained. Mr Munro reinforced that the police will use all methods /equipment available to them as and when necessary to catch and or restrain criminals.

Question 4(from an audience member.) Why does it still take so long to get through to 101?

Answer—Yes I agree, it can take some time, but it could be that the operator is dealing with an emergency when you phoned, so that would take priority over your call .However times have improved, with more staff on the dedicated switchboard and further improvements will be made. Note that we encourage the public to email, where possible, as that goes on record immediately.

7.Crime prevention tip .Mr Munro recommended that car users do not hang their keys up near the letter box overnight but purchase the signal blocking special pouches that you can buy from Amazon etc .These are good for safe storage of mobile phones and credit cards, to stop thieves accessing the data.

8. New police base in Cleeve Road Leatherhead (previously occupied by ERA and Cobham Industries)

The 10 acre site was purchased for 20.5 m and is to be built within 4/5 years, to replace the old building in Mount Browne Guildford which is expensive to maintain .The new, state of the art building, will be fit to combat modern crime. It will house all units of Surrey Police including the Tactical Firearms Unit at Burpham and The Roads Policing Unit at Godstone-both currently in outdated and costly buildings

The new building will be financed mainly from the closure and sale of Mount Browne HQ, and Reigate and Woking Police stations.

Mr Munro made it clear that Neighbourhood Policing Teams will still be operate in all 11 Surrey Boroughs, and that Reigate and Woking will not close until the new HQ is up and running .

Question 5 If you get more money from the sale of existing buildings than you need to build the new HQ, will Surrey Police keep the extra money?

Answer- Yes we will!

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Tony Russell

pp Caroline Browne Chair LRA